

City News

The Newsletter of the
City of Veneta

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<http://www.ci.veneta.or.us/>

Council signs off on water rate changes

After carefully studying the cost to secure adequate future drinking water for City residents and working deliberately to minimize those costs, the Veneta City Council has enacted the first of two expected water rate increases.

During its June 10 meeting, the Veneta City Council adopted two proposed utility rate changes: a drinking water fee increase of 25 percent and a temporary sewer fee reduction of 5 percent. Both changes are effective July 1.

The municipal water rate increase helps offset the cost of the nearly complete water pipeline between Veneta and Eugene while the wastewater fee reduction will help minimize the overall impact to city residents.

Overall, the average ratepayer could see an increase of approx. \$3.70

per month. The increase will be higher during peak water consumption periods in the summer for those residents who use more than the average of 5,000 gallons of drinking water.

When the City first considered the water pipeline project, the expected financial impact to residents was much higher. USDA Rural Development, a federal financing agency, projected the project would cost \$18.1 million.

"We started this process three years ago with Rural Development telling us we would need to increase the rates by 128 percent," says City Administrator Ric Ingham. "The council feels pretty solid that we've worked very diligently to bring the projected rate increase down."

Ingham says the City Council directed staff to reduce pipeline costs wherever possible. Provi-

dentially, the economic downturn lowered materials costs and created a good bidding environment, with contractors eager for work.

The current estimated final project cost is \$11 million, which would necessitate a 42 percent total water rate increase, including the current increase. The City, however, believes that when the project ends this fall, some potential savings will drive the final rate increase down.

"We hope that the total rate increase will be 40 percent or less," says Ingham, "with the second increase around 15 percent."

Two PowerPoint presentations created to explain the changes to the water and wastewater rates have been posted to the pipeline project section of the City website at:
<http://www.ci.veneta.or.us/waterpipeline.cfm>

Zumwalt Campground

The City of Veneta began operating Zumwalt Campground 21 years ago to fight illegal camping associated with the Oregon Country Fair event.

The campground was initiated to provide a low cost, legal alternative to reduce the impact on the community.

Lane County leases Zumwalt Park from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The City contracts with the county to use Zumwalt as a campground during the 3-day Oregon Country Fair.

"City staff and volunteers are excited to be hosting Zumwalt Campground for 2013, knowing that the proceeds from the event will continue to support the community swimming pool, youth scholarships, Elmira High Grad Night, athletic activities, arts, literacy and science programs," says Zumwalt Campground Coordinator Mindy Sandford.

Camping costs \$45 per person for the weekend while children 10 and under stay for free. There is a \$30.00 surcharge for RV's 25' and over.



VENETA SHUTTLE TO OREGON COUNTRY FAIR Friday July 12 & Saturday July 13



New this year, participants do not need a ticket from the City of Veneta to ride shuttle.

When boarding the bus you **MUST** have a Fair ticket!

Departure times are approx. and may include roundtrip stops to Zumwalt Campground

From Veneta Elementary to Fair
10:30am; 11:30am; 12:30pm; 1:30pm

From Fair to Veneta Elementary
4:30pm; 5:30pm; 6:30pm; 7:30pm

SPONSORED IN PARTNERSHIP BY THE CITY OF VENETA AND THE OREGON COUNTRY FAIR
For more information contact City of Veneta at 935-2191

Pool program provides summer youth employment

The Veneta Community Pool is not just a fun way to stay cool on a hot summer day. It is a valuable employment opportunity for many local youth.

In addition to the Pool Manager, Stacy Cornelius, the City of Veneta hires about 22 area youth and young adults as pool aids, life guards and swim instructors according to Human Resources Administrator Chris Workman.

"Generally, all of our applicants are high school students," says Workman, adding that the minimum age for lifeguards and swim instructors is 16. "We also get help from 4 fourteen year olds as swim aides."

All of Veneta's lifeguards are certified through the Red Cross, with training provided by the YMCA. The City pays for that training, spending \$175 per individual.

The lifeguard certification is good for two years, while lifeguards are re-certified for CPR every year during an annual in service day before the pool opens. CPR and emergency service plan training and additional in-service training goes on throughout the summer.

Lifeguards who want to step up and become swim instructors go through additional certification training administered by Red Cross instructors.

"Only the best of the best guards are chosen to be

swim instructors," says Workman, adding that, because the City has adopted the Red Cross swim instruction program, all swim classes given at the pool conform to that program. "Additionally, those that excel at swim instruction are also selected to give private lessons."

Most Veneta lifeguards return year after year. This year, the pool has 5 lifeguards working their third season at the pool and 5 working their second, with 9 new lifeguards.

"I always wanted to be a lifeguard and this is a great place to work," says Head Guard Merilea Valenzuela. "I came back because I feel like I'm making a difference serving my community and enjoy training the new lifeguards."

Many students work at the pool after graduating from high school. When they go away to college, they bring valuable skills to gain employment elsewhere. Some come back for summer break to work in Veneta again, Workman says, while others lifeguard year round where they are going to school.

"Working at the pool is a lot of fun," says Head Guard Samantha Carroll. "I have another part-time job here in town as well, so it works out really well for me."

Experienced landscape pro joins Public Works team

The City of Veneta takes pride in the ambiance created by its many acres of parks and urban greenspaces. Luckily, the City has a new ace up its sleeve when it comes to keeping its bounty of lawns and landscaping looking great.

In late April, the City hired Mark Eveland as a Utility Worker 1 to tackle its many landscaping needs, including tree and shrub care, and turf maintenance. Before joining the City's Public Works team, Eveland managed crews for landscape contractor Pro Grass Landscape Inc., where he had worked since 2000.

"He works very hard and brings a very good skill set for doing landscape," says Public Works Director Kyle Schauer. "His background is in professional landscaping and he's brought a lot of knowledge with him."

According to Schauer, Veneta had a backlog of landscaping tasks, which Eveland quickly accomplished while

taking over and organizing the landscaping program.

"He came in like gangbusters, and has done a lot that you can really see around the City," says Schauer. "He's a hardworking, upbeat guy with a great attitude."

Eveland brings 14 years of experience as a professional landscaper to the job. His training includes a pesticide application license, customer service, plant and plant disease identification. Eveland says that after years of running landscaping crews he was looking for career growth and the chance to work independently.

"I was lucky that the City of Veneta would give me a chance," he says, adding that he has already added concrete work to his skillset. "I feel humbled that I'm here. It's a good opportunity and I'm going to make the best of it."

A longtime West Eugene resident, Eveland says he and his family are looking forward to moving to Veneta. When not beautifying the City, Eveland says he

likes to ride bikes, camp, barbecue and spend time with his family, which includes, 2 children, 3 stepchildren and 2 grandkids.

"I like the smaller community," he says, "and I think it's time for my wife and I and my kids to have a change of pace from a city to a smaller community."



July 2013		Civic Calendar	July 2013
Date	Time	Meeting/Event	
8	7:00 p.m.	Veneta City Council Meeting - City Hall	
11	2:00 p.m.	Zumwalt Campground Opens	
14	11:00 a.m.	Zumwalt Campground Closes	
18	8:30 a.m.	Municipal Court - City Hall	
19	8:30-10:00 p.m.	Night Waves Teen Pool Party - Veneta Community Pool	
22	7:00 p.m.	Veneta City Council Meeting - City Hall	